

# ECLESIASTICAL ART VIEW

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## Spanish Renaissance in the New World

By Mary F. Nixon-Roulet

A study of Spanish Renaissance is one of the most interesting in all architecture. Its beauty of outline, its intricate design, the perfection of its detail, and its peculiarly Spanish manner make one wonder whence came the influences which, grafted to the Gothic—loved of Castilians—produced the style so

que.

renaissance," says a recent writer "in its merely partial acceptance and its adherence to the which it never hesitated to the new, diverged farther ished Renaissance type architecture north of

Renaissance flourished. onage of Isabella, fos- extended its arms to ia, newly conquered, so was of special concern ueen. Hence Castilian ent to establish ecclesi- sound basis, apart from ces. Such drew their othic, and it is indeed ascertain whence they nissance designs. Not re the school flourished, record of Spanish archi-

Italy until much later. fluence was of Italian me to Spain, for many eacute works of art for make tombs and monu- all carvings which had Italy.

to Borgia, Bishop of e Pope Adrian VI, he oeuvres d' art back to , and sculptors such as ini, *Fray Niculio*, and

ir work from Castile to Andalusia. his able treatise on "Art in Spain and us that a Catalan goldsmith named Pedro from Rome in 1458, was sent to Toledo, red such ascendency in the work shop of nat *Enrique Eges*, son of the master of the ntirely under his influence.

ain that it was possible to demonstrate that combine the new ornament with tradition something distinctively Spanish. Spanish ame, then, peculiarly personal. "Instead of

being the outcome of traditional methods, followed by the building crafts in general," says a recent writer, "it became rather the studied product of individual architects who, with their pupils formed, as it were, a school of design."

Different architects, painters, goldsmiths, sculptors, all contributed by their originality to this school, and Renaissance architects unhesitatingly borrowed from different schools. Modified Byzantine dome, Romanesque arches, Roman cross vaults and Gothic towers, mingled with the *Plateresque* decorations to form a harmonious whole.

In Spain the Renaissance was flamboyant but charming. Divided into three periods it consists of:

- (1) The *Plateresque*, or Silversmiths;
- (2) The Italian style, based on Palladio and Vignola, at the end of the seventeenth century;
- (3) *Rococo* or *Churrigueresque*.

All these are distinctive and interesting.

The *Plateresque*—Estilla *Plateresque* it was called, or *Fantasia Plateresco*—was coined to apply to buildings which aped the gold or silversmith's style of ornamentation; the Italian was more classic; the *Rococo*, ornamental.

The bizarre Baroque, at the beginning of the seventeenth century, created again the human in architectural style, and broke away from the classic, a style attractive at first, but said to be "at its best an assertion of freedom and at its worst a lapse into license."

From Castile to the exotic colonies of New Spain, the architects produced luxurious specimens of their art, and through *Plateresque*, *Classic* and *Churrigueresque* periods, freedom of design was insisted upon.

The ornamentation was Gothic, Moorish, and Renaissance, and was wonderful in style. Tombs, retables, choir stalls, statues, and canopies wrought in *rejas*, are most beautiful examples of *Plateresque* in the Spanish cathedrals, and the appurtenances of the church, reliquaries, candelabra, book covers, and monstrances, all show the artistic trend of the *Plateresque* style.

Of these cathedrals, the best example of the style are the Cathedral of Jaen, that of Granada, and the western facade of the Cathedral of Santiago di Compostella.

Perhaps the most striking example is the cathedral of Granada. It was designed by Diego de Silva, a builder who



Staircase, Burgos Cathedral

had a noble idea of early Gothic and understood the principles thereof.

The church is four hundred feet long by two hundred and thirty wide, with an outer arch which extends around the whole church and gives on the magnificent chapels which ornament the building.

*Eges* wrought in this cathedral and his work is an example of perfect *Plateresque*.

A strange feature of this cathedral is at the east end where the position ordinarily held by the apse is given to a round area of seventy feet, surmounted by a lofty dome, beneath which the great altar stands in a magnificent flow of light. This is the only sample of this style of architecture in Spain and is the more interesting for that account.

The *rejas*, or wrought iron grilles very much ornamented with gilt, are specially splendid in the church at Granada, and the same are found inclosing chapels at Seville, Palencia, Cuenca, Salamanca, and Toledo. This metal work is an exceptional feature of Spanish Renaissance cathedrals, and there is an iron pulpit at Avila, and a stairway at Burgos which have a world-wide fame in the line of metallurgy.

Perhaps the most magnificent feature of the Renaissance churches in Spain is the portals which ornament the facades, which are often things of wonder and beauty.

The facade of Santiago di Compostella is of rare beauty, its two towers are very fine, the one higher than the other being the belfry, as in the Cathedral of Jaen, and the richly carved western facade of both these cathedrals, in the *Plateresque* manner, gives one a hint of the cathedrals of the New World and whence came their style.

There was, however, another style, which appealed to the Spanish of the New World, and consequently is to be found in their cathedrals.

When other portions of Europe were turning to classical models, Spain, ever slow to desert the established things of its fathers, was still building cathedrals in the Gothic style, with a pleasing adaptation of Moorish ornament, picturesque and artistic. Hints of the Moorish are to be found in many of the best examples of *Plateresque*, and it is easily distinguishable grouped with Arabic and Indian in the churches of Cortez' day and since in the New World. Indeed Mexican architecture of that time is said to be "a distinct product from the Semi-Moorish stucco architecture of Andalusia."

It is difficult to place an exact name upon the Spanish ecclesiastical architecture of the New World. Some

writers dub it Baroque; others *Plateresque*. The first church buildings were of early style, but they were so largely remodelled or any definite style is difficult to determine, combination of styles runs the gamut of *Renaissance*, *Renaissance* and Baroque.

The Cathedral of Havana, Cuba, dating while not as early as the Cathedral of M<sup>ad</sup>rid, justly be considered as a stepping stone to the Spanish Renaissance of the Old World and

Its style is called *Hispano-American*, and it reminds one of the Cathedral of Jaen in simplicity of outline. With domed roof, the

has a handsome facade with two towers, than the other, and serves as a belfry, magnificently topped, still calls the faithful. The columned facade, its ornamentation simpler than many *Plateresque* in manner, ornamented as World buildings, it charm, the three towers surmounted in excellent style.

The interior is solemn, its walls of coloured marbles of good taste, plainly profusely decorated usually to be found in America.

The beautifully carved choir stalls are polished mahogany, the columns are of wood, giving the effect of dark red marble, off by their bronze capitals, they are artistic.

In the Choir bones were interred after their devious wanderings, from Valladolid, his body was first sent, thence to Seville, Domingo.

Of late the San Domingans have claimed to never taken to Havana, as bones have been found which they insist are those of the great discoverer, the resting place of the remains of that saint who gave a New World to Castile and Leon, a matter of controversy to San Domingo and Mexico.

The oldest church in Mexico is at Xochimilco, was built in 1570, a strange edifice, surrounded by light walls. It belongs to the cupola type, elaborate octagon cupola, and the walls are with small pointed peaks. The coloring of the church is black and white *azulejo*, very Moorish, and turned to rich cream with age.

The domes of Mexican churches are one of the principal features of architectural style in this century.



Cathedral at Granada

line and a profusion of them is to be Mexico.ones are low in structure, and they are of the local stone, although at times colored in glowing and beautiful, reminding one of Aragossa, or *Le Seo* of the same Spanish city. An old church in this same style is at Iglesia de la Soledad, with a cupola of glass in color, with very little decoration of the Pocito Villa de Guadalupe is an example of the combination of *Churrigueresque* and hence of particular interest to students. Built in is a bit of time, although small in style,\* expression in language. Luxuriant, it is coloring, and sign of ornaments are unusual, as are beauties. The dome is whole tropits surroundsays in his "Iglesia di "this chapel so heterogenousrepresents the example of a period—the fitting in the of the single characters defined, of up surviving world."

shows the the Colonial *Carmen de San* three cupolas,ills in a quaint belfry remind one very early mission churches of California. The bwns, and tawny hues of its plaster are yphony in color, for which the beauty of fords a fit setting.

simpler forms of church art, one next elaborate style of another era, of which Mexico is the most noted example. The nineteenth century says of its style: "Mexico did not begin with cold-work of three centuries it brought the to a peak, but conserved certain graces, in its interior the unity achieved by the, who gave it such a forceful style that bound it necessary to sum up his tastes. Baroque of the XVII century, the *Churrigueresque* of the XVIII and the neo-classics of the XIX d a it."

should not be confused with North American Colonial, which is an entirely different type.

translated from original Spanish of Dr. Alt's book.

that period of Mexico ruled by a Spanish viceroy sent from Spain and responsible directly to the crown.

This Cathedral is also said to be "the religious monument of excellence by which we are able to judge all the art of the *virreinato*."‡

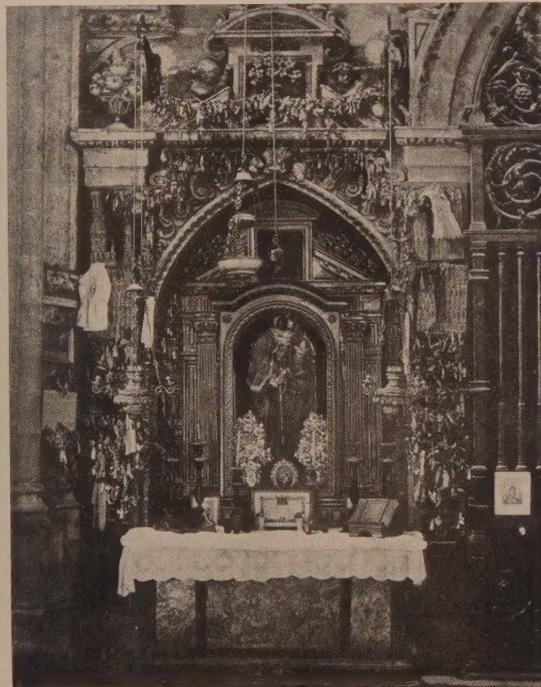
The Cathedral of the City of Mexico is to this day an embodiment of the Catholic spirit of Old Spain. It has been called the "apotheosis of the Faith," built, as it was, upon the old pagan sacrificial *Acocalli*, or Aztec temple, where human sacrifices were offered up to false gods. The Aztec temples were wonders of composite building. They used varied materials. As Charnay, the French archaeologist says:

"Unlike most primitive nations, they used every material at once. They coated their inner walls with mud and mortar, faced their outer walls with baked bricks and cut stone, had wooden roofs and brick and stone staircases. They were acquainted with pilasters and caryatides, with square and round columns; indeed they seem to have been familiar with every architectural device. That they were painters and sculptors we had ample indications in a house that we unearthed, where the walls were covered with rosettes, palms, and red, white and gray geometrical figures on a black ground."

Perhaps the fact that the Aztec churches were so wonderfully constructed may account for the perfect execution of the more modern places of worship, for the *peons* carried to perfection the ideas of their Spanish masters. For two hundred years after the Spanish conquest, church building was an epoch in Mexico. The Spaniards, with their Gothic trend, brought a beautiful style to the New World, so that even in small

villages one finds marvellous structures, with glimpses of Italy, or touches of Moorish art. Built of stone and stucco, they are faded to a soft cream, rarely beautiful. It was of native stone that the Cathedral of Mexico City was made, the first stone being laid in 1573, in the reign of Philip II, Cortez having begun it at the instigation of the king.

The place of its foundation was so marshy that its building was slow, in fifty years the walls being only twenty feet high. It was not finished until 1730, and cost three million dollars; it is four hundred feet long and one hundred and seventy-nine feet high, with a magnificent dome over all. In style it is to be "Gothic, with dome and Corinthian pilasters," so says one writer, and many are the styles bestowed upon it. As a matter of fact, it is one of the best examples of the Spanish Renaissance in existence, leaning a little towards *Rococo* and *Churrigueresque*, with its towers terminating in huge



Chapel of the Virgin, Seville

belfries, and masses of carving on the facade. Its exterior is inspiring and massive, and the interior is splendid, forming as it does, a vista of severe elegance.

The choir is superb, with magnificently carved seats, the backs of which bear deep bas-reliefs of the apostles and saints. The choir railings are of *tumbage*, a heavy bronze looking material (from Macao, China), made of silver, gold and copper, and are gorgeously ornamented.

So perfectly ornamented is the organ loft that it seems impossible to believe that it dates from 1736, and the work of Indian artizans. Angels are sculptured at either side of the organ pipes, and musical cherubs, with their pipes and horns, play above the organ, while ornaments in profusion are clustered about the pipes.

The cupola shows a marvelous picture—an Assumption of the Virgin, painted in 1791 by Jimino, a noted Mexican artist, who has followed Murillo's technique, with cherubs, angels, flowers and foliage depicted amidst the clouds.

The *Sagrario* adjoining the Cathedral is one of the most interesting spots architecturally. Its exterior has a superb facade carved uniquely. Its interior is filled with rare and lovely things: vestments donated by Isabella the Catholic, embroidered in silver an inch deep, decorated with gems, and resembling the finest paintings, instead of the needlework they really are. One wonders whether they still remain in use, since Mexico is so under pagan rule in this twentieth century that her priests and monks are seldom allowed to say Mass and are even sacrificed like the missionary martyrs of former days.

The numerous chapels of the Cathedral are all decorated with valuable old paintings and faded splendours are everywhere, one of the most interesting being the *Chapella de los Reyes*, the lovely altar of which is one of the gems of the Cathedral. Designed by a Sevillian sculptor, Jeronimo de Balias, it was begun in 1718, and finished in 1737. All the statues in this chapel are of royal saints, St. Louis, St. Ferdinand, and others. This is according to custom since the chapel is royal, and usually only those of royal birth are interred in the crypt beneath.

The painting over the altar is by the Mexican painter, Juarez, and is in the Murillo manner, very soft and beautiful.

Throughout the provinces of Mexico, the churches are often a gorgeous combination of architectural styles.

The church at Tepozotlan is a superb specimen of architecture. It is an oddly shaped edifice, with only one tower, and one cannot tell whether it was intended so to be, or whether a second tower was to have been added at a later date.

The facade is a mass of intricate carwrought. There is only one door, one arch beautifully outlined in carvings and four sided and curiously indented in a frame of stone.

There are three tiers to the facade, all the upper one terminates in six tiny turrets delightfully insouciant. The centre of the figure of Our Lady. The facade makes a carving, as in many of the Mexican buildings of the Indians, forced labor for their country, the less artistic and interesting, a blending of Aztec art.

The single church is stained. Its four stories the lower one plain; the second only with four elegantly carved pillars; the third having with a silver-carved pillar; the upper other bell, more carving, charming little extensively, and ending with the entire structure.

Of all the churches perhaps the most certainly the most that of Our Lady, begun in 1532, in the present aspect date when it was finished.

It is a superb Spanish Renaissance dome and two to nificent facade, ungraceful, it is the holder of Charles' remarks about the of Mexican building.

"In nearly every one of them," he says, "an unexpected fancy, a belfry oddly placed, surprises with the quaintness of its rich bit of deep stone carving, and in the plainest facade there is a note yielding to a whim of expression that is fascinating. The architects escaped from the and conventional; they understood practical regularity; and the result is perhaps due to those who are only accustomed to architecture."

The church of *Nuestra Senora de Guadalupe* cost one-half million dollars. From the floor to the roof one hundred and twenty-five feet, and the width of the building is one hundred and twenty-five feet by one hundred and twenty-five feet. The aspect of the front of the church is a fine example of architecture. Its carvings are rare, its cupola very dainty, and the portal worthy of the interior to which it gives access.



Immaculate Conception Chapel, Seville

he church, one's eye instantly reaches to  
tar of snowy Carrara, enclosed by a solid  
g, weighing twenty-six tons, where is en-  
acred tilma which is surmounted by a golden  
th diamonds, rubies, and sapphires, a glitter-  
which was presented to the shrine by the  
Mexico, who stripped themselves of their  
to present it to Our Lady.

is loved and revered by all the pilgrims who  
shrine—forty thousand a year, we are told—and  
d with the miraculous beginning of the shrine.  
s that an Indian, in the year 1531, named Juan  
walking

one day  
hen he  
r Lady  
im and

ego, go  
op here  
to build  
in my  
d Our  
d to him

to his  
Diego  
sion and  
an bade  
and see  
r Lady  
nd if so,  
a sign.  
ego did,  
y bade  
a barren  
gather  
ke them  
p.

he erstwhile arid hill, Juan found there  
with the most exquisite fragrance. These  
nd carefully wrapping them in his tilma, a  
lancket made of ixtl fibres, he bore them  
e bishop, opening the blanket for no one  
he bishop opened it he found a picture of  
one upon the rough cloth, in beautiful

full of color to this day, shrined above the  
loved and revered by the pilgrims who

istory of Architecture.

seek the shrine, singing: to their protector, Our Lady of  
Guadalupe:

*"From Heaven she descended  
"Triumphant and glorious  
"To favor us  
"La Guadalupana."*

The devotion to this shrine is commensurate with its  
beauty. Our Lady of Guadalupe has been the patron of  
countless hard endeavours. Noted amongst them was the  
insurrection of Hidalgo, the Mexican priest who rebelled  
against the Spanish yoke and in 1810 raised the cry of  
rebellion. He had the picture of Our Lady of Guadalupe  
painted on his banner  
and so incited the natives to follow the  
standard one hundred  
thousand strong.  
Hidalgo was vanquished and killed by  
the Spaniards in 1811, but the insurgents  
continued the war and after eleven years of  
fighting, independence was achieved and the  
Viceroy's were no more. Our Lady of Guadalupe had conquered.

There are many  
other churches in  
Mexico of equal interest  
architecturally to the  
church at Guadalupe—churches that  
also show the Renaissance manner. They  
are roccoco and florid, but their carved  
facades are always ex-

quisite, whether *Churrigueresque* or *Plateresque*. The Mexican  
manner was characterized by "surface decoration spreading  
over broad areas, especially around doors and windows, florid  
escutcheons, and Gothic details mingling with delicately  
chiselled arabesques. Decorative pilasters with broken entablatures  
and carved baluster-shafts were employed with little reference  
to constructive lines, but with great refinement of detail,  
in spite of the exuberant profusion of the ornament."\*

Of all the Mexican style the *Hispano-Mudejar* remains the  
most attractive and ever shows sermons in stone of great beauty.



Cathedral, Havana







**MARBLE MAIN ALTAR**

Cathedral of Our Lady of Sorrows, Natchez, Miss.

A truly beautiful design executed with richly carved ornament immaculately white throughout. The tabernacle, the glittering cross and the sacred symbolisms of the antependium stand out rightly in contrast with the snowy background. Produced in the Studios of Daprato Statuary Company, Chicago, New York, Pietrasanta, Italy.



**MARBLE MAIN ALTAR**

Chapel of St. Francis Hospital, Evanston, Illinois  
 Poor Sisters of St. Francis Seraph of  
 Perpetual Adoration

Chiampa Rosa Marble with panels of Breccia Montalto Marble form a rich setting for a series of perfect sculptures of Bianco P. Primissima. Specially designed and executed by Daprato Statuary Company, Chicago, New York, Pietrasanta, Italy.

**PERSPECTIVE VIEW, MARBLE ALTAR**

St. Francis Hospital Chapel, Evanston, Illinois

It with consummate skill assume added interest when the fine technique of their execution become defined. Here will be seen the exquisite artistry of an altar perfect in proportion masterfully carved and executed. The immaculate whiteness of the sculptures stand out like cameos in a jewel design.

**MAIN ALTAR OF MARBLE, OAK AND MOSAIC**

Mary, Queen of Heaven Church, Cicero, Illinois

Rev. William J. Rooney, Pastor

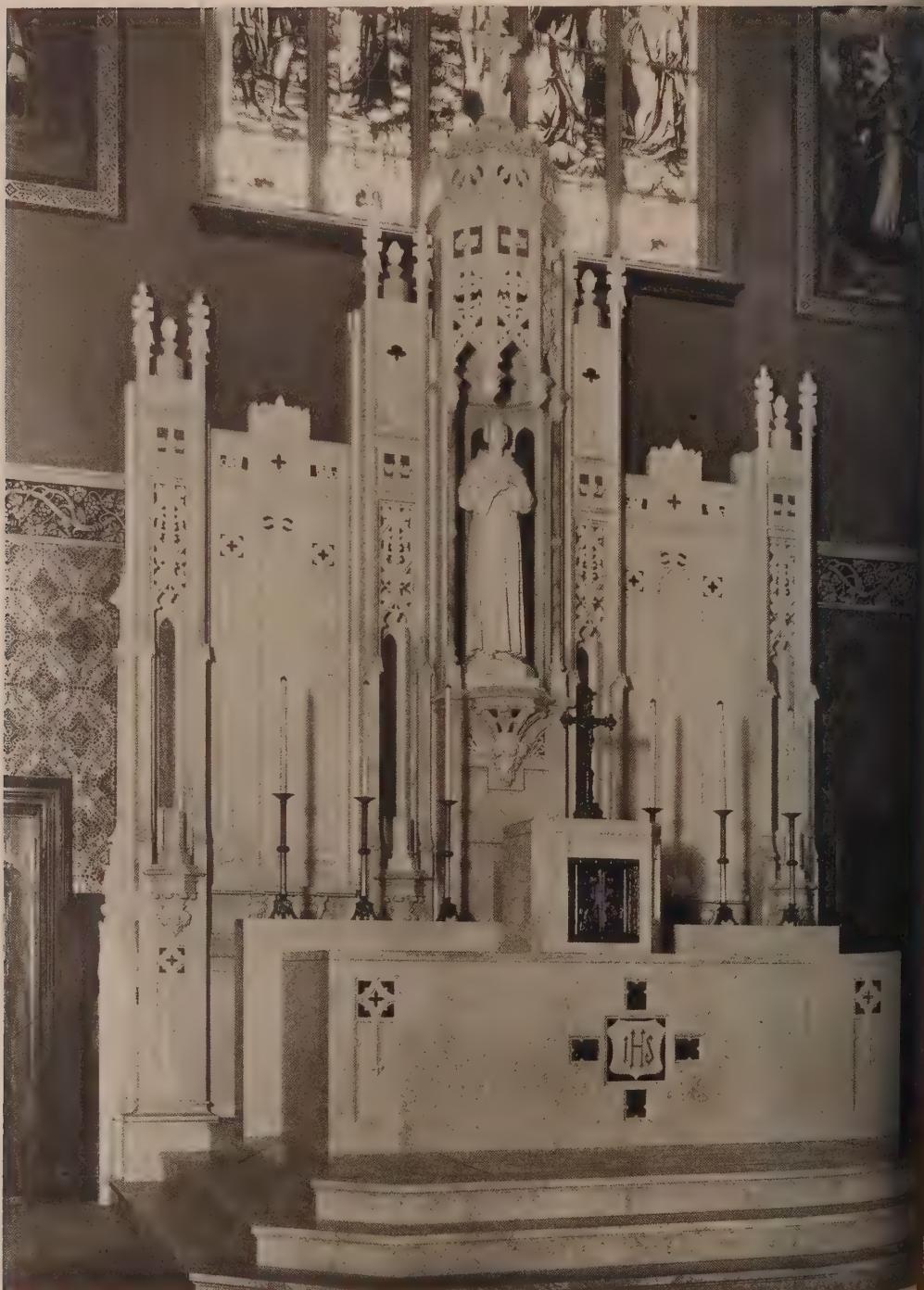
Dark oak of a rich grain forms the background for a beautiful mosaic after painting by Morgari. In proportion it splendidly suits the scale of dimensions required by the spacious sanctuary. The altar proper is of five different colored marbles with matched panels of Giallo Sienna on a background of Verde Antico and Verde Piasco. Designed by Joe W. McCarthy, Architect. Executed by Daprato Studios.



**MARBLE SIDE ALTAR**

Mary, Queen of Heaven Church, Cicero, Illinois

is selected for their special colors and markings provide the means for rare artistry in execution. This beautiful altar, greatly admired for its individuality, has been wrought in a most pleasing combination of Verde Antico, Giallo Sienna, Rosso Verona, Rosso Levanto and Rose Tavernelle Marbles. The statue is an inspiring sculpture of selected white Carrara.

**LITURGICAL MARBLE ALTAR, CHURCH OF ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI**

South Fitchburg, Mass., Rev. L. A. Langlois, Pastor

Much interest has been aroused by this masterpiece of sculptured marble and we here illustrate it in order to show clearly the separation between the altar and the reredos. Rising to a considerable height to properly fill the sanctuary, it is nevertheless still strictly rubrical in its form and design. Daprato Studios, who executed this altar, would like to send photographs of it to all who may be particularly interested in liturgical altars.



**MARBLE ALTAR OF PRIVATE CHAPEL**

Rt. Rev. John J. McMahon, D.D., Bishop of Trenton  
Trenton, N. J.

painting, colorful and brilliant in sharp contrasts is made doubly resplendent by an altar in  
tingly harmonious. The marble of this altar was specially chosen for color and veining  
complete the beauty of this attractive chapel. Production of the Studios of Daprato  
Statuary Company, Chicago, New York, Pietrasanta, Italy.



#### DETAIL OF SIDE ALTAR

St. Clement's Church, Chicago, Illinois

Rt. Rev. Msgr. F. A. Rempe, Pastor

No written description is adequate to do justice to the beauty of coloring evidenced in this side altar and mosaic. Like miniature enamel work encrusted on jewels of rare quality the mosaics are in a myriad of colors and tints. Located in a partially enclosed niche the richness of the art is especially fascinating to behold. Specially designed and executed by Daprato Statuary Company, Chicago, New York, Pietrasanta, Italy.

**MARBLE SEDILIA**

St. Clement's Church, Chicago, Illinois

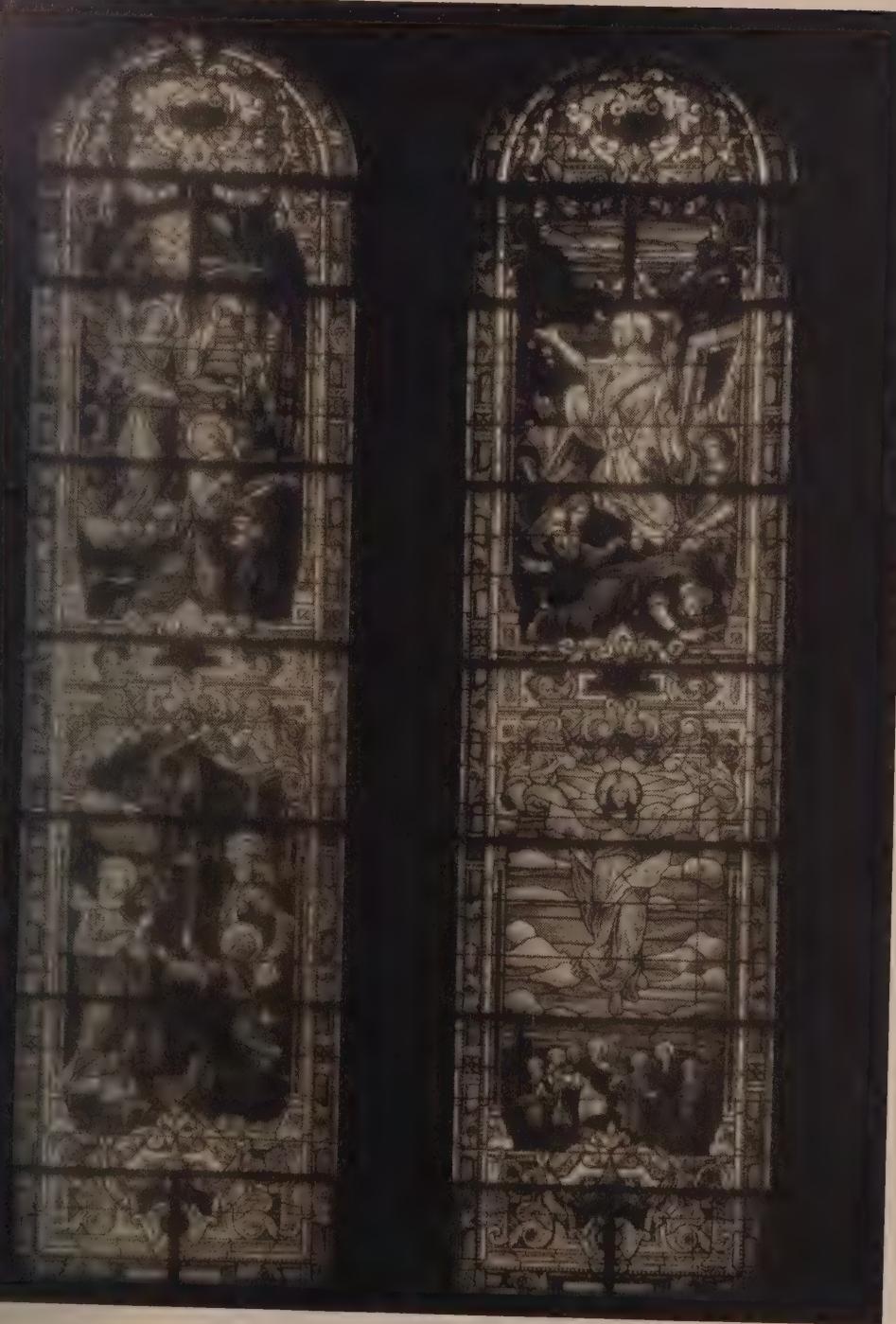
marble enriched with inlaid colored marbles forms a most pleasing background for the brilliant  
ornamentation and contrasting red cushions of this sedilia. The unusual beauty of this com-  
paratively minor detail of sanctuary furnishings is but another example of the care and  
attention given to even the less important objects of the church interior by  
artists of Daprato Statuary Company Studios.



#### ONE OF FOURTEEN SIDE ALTARS IN CHAPEL

Sacred Heart Retreat, Passionist Fathers, Louisville, Ky.

Deep spiritual feeling combines with striking architectural beauty to make this series of altars a medium of religious inspiration. Each scene is beautifully portrayed by reliefs realistically colored while the altars with their symbolic ornamentation are in ivory tints of delicate variations. Specially designed and executed in the Studios of Daprato Statuary Company.



**STAINED GLASS WINDOWS**

St. Michael's Church, Philadelphia, Pa.

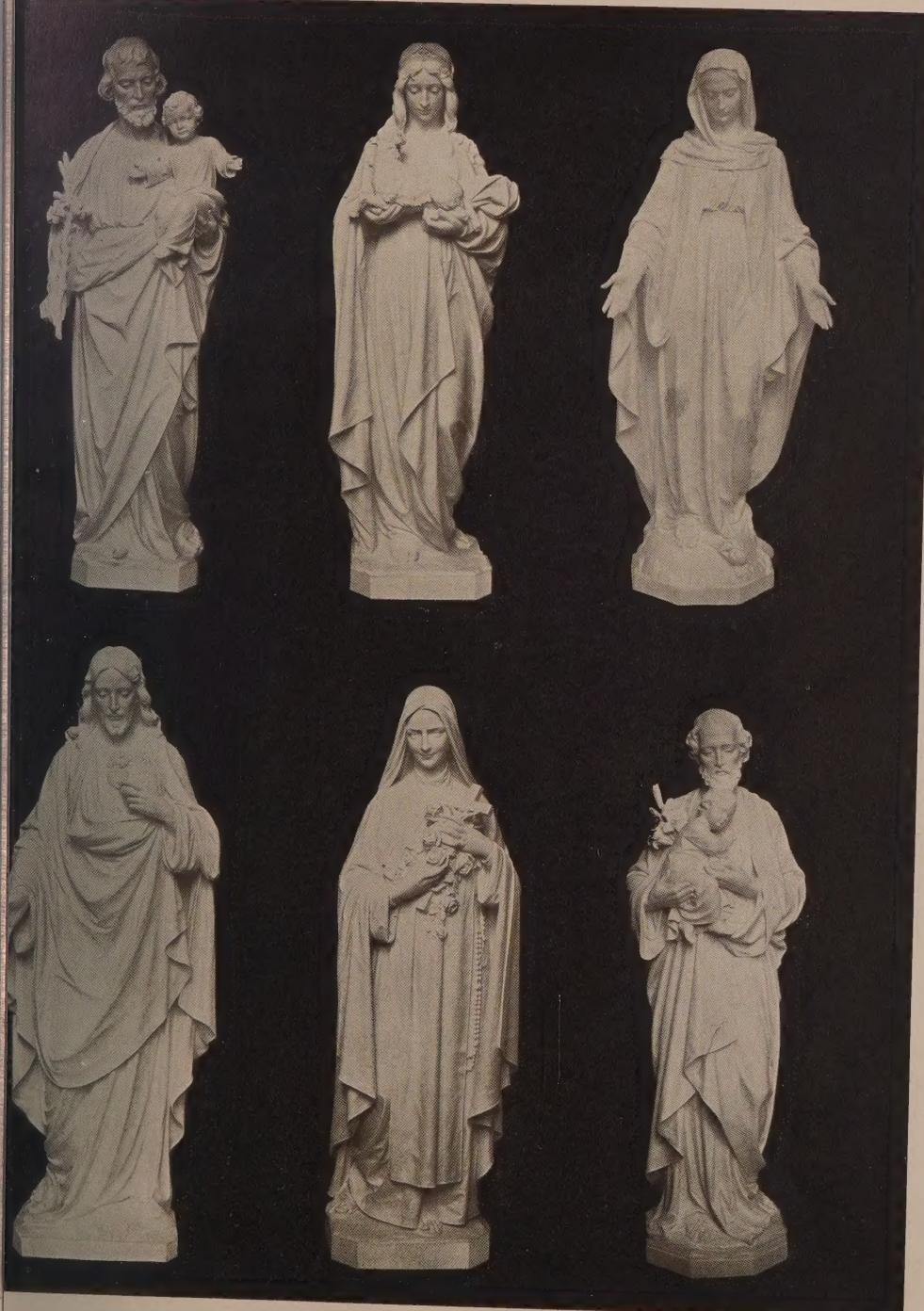
Rev. James J. Wilson, P.R., Rector

Is there anything more inspiring than windows of wondrous color and beauty? These gorgeous creations of Daprato vividly portray scriptural scenes with all the art of masterfully wrought stained glass. Rich sparkling colors combine with splendid composition to make these windows outstanding specimens of rare craftsmanship.

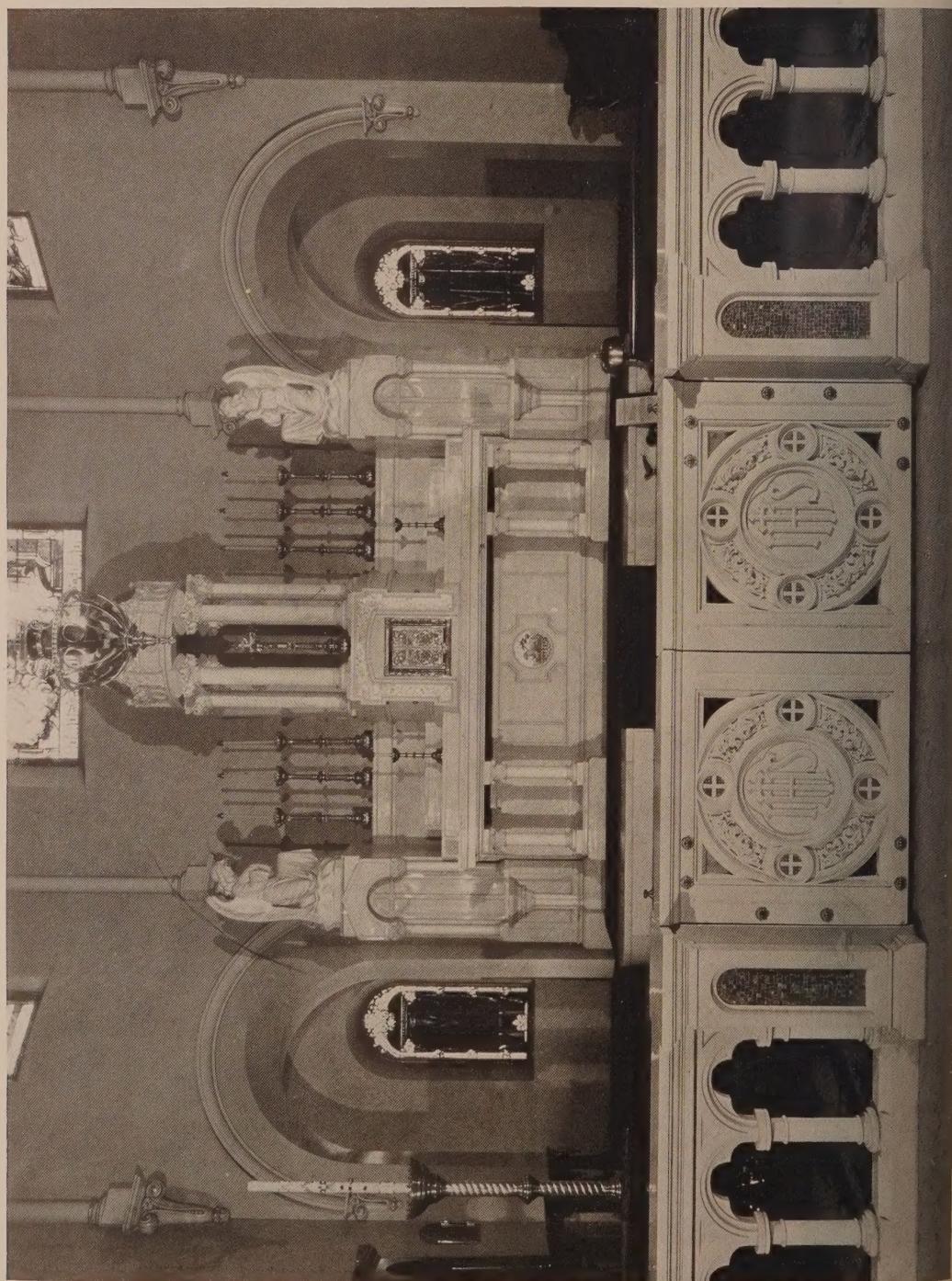
**SECTIONAL VIEWS OF TWO MARBLE RAILINGS**

Produced in the Studios of Daprato Statuary Company

Carvings deeply cut and sharply executed reveal in crisp outlines the masterful touch of talent.



es of marble which clearly tell a story of superior facilities. Any church seeking sculptures of  
ould be singularly fortunate to obtain work of the quality shown here. These are specimens  
e highly artistic work which emanates from the Studios of Daprato Statuary Company,  
Chicago, New York, Pietrasanta, Italy.



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SHRINES—Marble, Scagliola, Rigalico  
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#### SHRINE OF THE LITTLE FLOWER

The art of Daprato Studios commands admiration because its fine points are always readily discernible. The shrine's molded carvings stand out in sharp relief. A splendid note of authenticity is apparent in the architectural style while the ornamentation discloses a knowledge of correctly applied enrichment.